International Cooperation

7. India has a Memorandum of Understanding with Nepal on controlling trans-boundary illegal trade in wildlife and conservation, apart from a protocol on tiger conservation with China.

8. A Global Tiger Forum of Tiger Range Countries has been created for addressing international issues related to tiger conservation.

9. During the 14th meeting of the Conference of Parties to CITES, which was held from 3rd to 15th June, 2007 at The Hague, India introduced a resolution along with China, Nepal and the Russian Federation, which contains directions to Parties with operations breeding tigers on a commercial scale, for restricting such captive populations to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers. The resolution was adopted with minor amendments. Further, India made an intervention appealing to China to phase out tiger farming, and eliminate stockpiles of Asian big cats body parts and derivatives. The importance of continuing the ban on trade of body parts of tigers was emphasized.

Prevention of forest fire

1260. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB PEEVEE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any effective strategies have been worked out in consultation with the State Government for prevention, detection and control of forest fire in the State of Kerala; and

(b) the damage caused by fires during the last three years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS(SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) Under the Centrally Sponsored, Integrated Forest Protection Scheme, financial assistance on sharing basis is provided to States/JTs for various protection related measures including prevention, detection and control of forest fire.

(b) The details of damage caused by fires during the last three years, year-wise is as under:

Year	No. of incidents	Loss due to fire (Rs. In lakhs)
2004-05	70	0.12
2005-06	341	1.05
2006-07	426	2.56

Creation of a separate Ministry

1261. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to create a separate Ministry for wildlife;

(b) whether a group of 140 tiger experts and NGOs have also demanded for creation of a separate Ministry for wildlife;

(c) if so, the details in this regard;

(d) whether it is a fact that in 2006, there was a proposal to bifurcate the Ministry of Environment and Forests into two - one for environment and the other for wildlife; and

(e) if so, the status of that proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Question does not arise.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. There was a proposal to have two separate Departments, *viz.* Department of Environment, and Department of Forests and Wildlife. That proposal is under consideration.

Forest clearance for iron ore mining

1262. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of private companies which have sought clearance from the Ministry for mining of iron ore from the State of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether Obulapuram Mining Corporation (OMC) also sought forest clearance for iron ore mining in Ananthapur district in the State;

(c) the number of years since the company has been mining the iron ore in the district; and

(d) the history of clearances given to the said company;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY) : (a) Six private companies have sought forestry clearance under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 from the Ministry of Environment and Forests for mining of iron ore in the State of Andhra Pradesh.

(b) Yes sir.

(c) M/s Obulapuram Mining Company Pvt. Ltd. has been granted mining lease for mining of iron ore in Ananthapur District from January, 2003 onwards.

(d) The details of mining leases granted to M/s Obulapuram Mining Company Pvt. Ltd. are as under:-

1.	Diversion of 25.98 ha. of forest land for renewal of mining lease in Sy. No. 1/P of Obulapuram village, D. Hirehal Mandal, Ananthapur District.	(i)	The approval was accorded by the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 on 19.7.1995 in favour of M/s G Rammohan Reddy, which was subsequently transferred in favour of M/s Obulapuram Mining Co. Pvt. Ltd. on 15.1.2003.